

Problem: DPs for HSC exams and many exam bases assessments are becoming onerous and a bit absurd

Solution: universal design for exam assessment

For examples: elongate the allowed exam length for all students such that they don't prioritise speed/fluency to quite the same degree; students can all use noise cancelling headphones, ear plugs, computers (without wifi) for notation, rest breaks to quietly go to local and supervised toilets and/or stretch, leave when they like.

Benefit: a much bigger range of human diversity could be better (if still imperfectly) provided for without requiring people to identify as disabled; money that funds the salaries of people employed to form fill, read and assess form and so on, could rather fund the salaries of those whom teach or support teachers (teachers aides etc).

- Increasing number of DPs (we recently ran an HSC Trial Music exam for a class of 11 students and we needed 8 rooms so we had to have 4 supervisors and 2 sittings of the exam). This is onerous and is becoming more and more onerous every year.
- Bureaucratic requirements (designed in the name of fairness) to access a range of fairly ordinary provisions (eg extra time, rest breaks, headphones, typewritten notation) mean that the children of the professional-managerial class get a disproportionate allocation of disability provisions (which is unfair) and many children have no access but desperately need them. This is because schools in some areas have many medical specialists in the local area, the parents in some schools in these areas are rich enough to afford the cost of each appointment and multiple appointments and the certificates and assessments and paperwork are easy to access by highly organised and assertive parent advocates. Also wealthy schools have special people on staff who can help facilitate the organisation of paperwork and the schoolteachers at wealthy schools have more time to keep track of routine and special adjustments and provisions that themselves, over time, become part of the evidence for assessing the suitability of provisions. (Also, NCCD paperwork is very thorough (over thorough?) at private schools so that special learning teams are very well funded according to the number of students with a disability they have helped to assess for that disability.)
- Because the success of past provisions in non-HSC exams is part of the evidence for the need/success of certain provisions for the HSC, schools that can support special provisions in exams way before HSC are more eligible for provisions for HSC exams. So this system (of providing many and varied provisions for certain students who might one day be diagnosed!) is bleeding into earlier and earlier assessments and thus onerous levels of DPS are used for Y9, 10, 11 etc exams and assessments.
- The provisions are only those that can be provided and therefore often weirdly arbitrary for the considering the complexity of many conditions that right require provisions. (2.5 or 5 minutes of extra time AND/OR rest time per half an hour or using headphones or using a computer or ear plugs is a gesture in the service of equality not really adequate)
- In any case, assessments aren't perfect anyway. For example if the difference between being assessed as "able" to do certain kinds of maths or essay writing or knowing certain content could be better done with some flexibility of exam length, then possibly all students could better show what they are able to do if the exam length was flexible for everyone or if anyone was allowed to use headphones or earplugs or if anyone could use a computer keyboard to write instead of hand writing.
- Normal exam conditions aren't authentic anyway (in the professional world we don't write essays at high speed) so we should change them to enable the most humans (not just those with a diagnosis) to be able to show what they can do, rather than pursue a very unequal procedures in the name of equality and fairness across the board.